National Corn Husking Contest
"Battle of the Bangboards"

Highlights from five National Corn Husking Contests sponsored by leading farm publications, including:

The Farmer and Farm Stock & Home (Minnesota, South Dakota)
The Prairie Farmer (Illinois, Indiana)
The Nebraska Farmer
Wallaces Farmer & Iowa Homestead
Missouri Ruralist
Kansas Farmer
The Ohio Farmer
Wisconsin Agriculturists & Farmer

The National Corn Husking Contest was the dream of then Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace who organized the contests "in the hope of providing farm boys with a distinctly rural sport." The event later became known as "the greatest of all rural athletic events."

The dates, locations and special features of the five featured National Corn Husking Contests duplicated from 16mm movie film to video tape include:

1934 – The 11th Annual National Corn Husking Contest was held Nov. 8 near Fairmont, MN; Crowd estimated at $60,000-80,000 – "larger than any crowd that had seen a World Series baseball game." The 1934 event includes advertiser/equipment displays, a parade of tractors ("mostly with rubber tires") pulling wagons carrying the 18 participants. The winner was Ted Balko, Redwood Falls, MN who received a $100 check from Berry Akers, Managing Editor of The Farmer/Farm Stock & Home.

Sound

1937 – The 14th Annual National Corn Husking Contest was hosted by the Missouri Ruralist at the 400-acre Webber Bros. Farm near Marshall, MO. The event also hosted "The Calvert Mule Show" and featured a demonstration of a Minneapolis Moline 2-row tractor-mounted cultivator. The winner of the 1973 contest was Ray ("Hard Luck Ray") Hansen.

1938 – The 15th Annual Corn Husking Contest was staged at the 470-acre farm of J. N. Jensen of Dell Rapids, SD. Featured at the 1938 event was the crowning of the Corn Husking Queen, Benita Apply; the South Dakota State

College Student Band and Indian (native American) dancers. The winner was six-time Minnesota Husker winner Ted Balko.

1940 – The 17th Annual Corn Husking Contest was hosted by Wallaces Farmer & Iowa Homestead at the farm of Henry Keppy, Sr., 6 miles outside of Davenport, IA. By 1940, there were 330 county, 10 district and 11 state contests held as qualifying events to the national Contest. Aerial views of the event grounds shows an estimated 52,000 cars, a Catepillar demonstration, the first driving demonstration of a 20-horse team, and the Goodyear Blimp. The winner in 1940 was Illinois' Irvin Bauman. Awards were presented by baseball player Bob Feller ("Iowa's Pride") and contest manager Art Thompson.

1941 – The 18th Annual Corn Husking Contest was staged at the farm of Theodore Schafer & Sons, 2 miles west of Tonica, IL. The film shows scenes of cars arriving at Tonica, Goodyear Blimp aerial views of the grounds and the Prairie Farmer/WLS Radio tower. Floyd Wise, Prairie Center, IL, the winner, was presented by Jim Edwards, Prairie Farmer.